

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-9 (canceled).

10. (currently amended): A screw for use in an extruder comprising a cylinder for carrying a rubber material supplied from a hopper port at an upstream end of the cylinder by the screw, molding it into a predetermined sectional form and extruding it from a nozzle attached to a downstream end of the cylinder,

wherein a height of a flight portion of ~~that part of~~ the screw located below the hopper port is lower than a height of a flight portion located on a downstream side, ~~and said height at said part and varies~~ continuously ~~changes~~ in a peripheral direction ~~over a predetermined rotational angle of at a predetermined angle with respect to an axial direction of~~ the screw.

11. (currently amended): The screw according to claim 10, wherein a portion of the screw where the height of the flight portion is lower than the height of the flight portion on the downstream side ~~subtends a rotational~~ ~~has an~~ angle of 180° or less.

12. (previously presented): The screw according to claim 10, wherein a number of threads on an upstream side of the screw is made smaller than a number of threads on the downstream side.

13. (previously presented): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein an interval of the threads on an upstream side is made wider than an interval of the threads on the downstream side.

14. (previously presented): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein diameter of the thread on an upstream side of the screw are made larger than diameters of the threads on a downstream side.

15. (currently amended): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein the diameter of the screw ~~the height of the flight portion~~ located below the hopper port is between 2% and 6 % smaller than the diameter of the screw at the downstream side owing to the reduced height of the flight at the part located below the hopper.

16. (withdrawn): A process for producing a screw for use in an extruder for carrying a rubber material supplied from a hopper port at the rear of the cylinder of the extruder by the screw, molding it into a predetermined sectional form and extruding it from a nozzle attached to the end of the cylinder, the process comprising cutting away a peripheral portion of a flight portion located below the hopper port of an existing screw at a predetermined angle so that the height of the flight portion continuously changes in a peripheral direction to produce a screw having the flight portion located below the hopper port lower than the height of the flight portion on a downstream side.

17. (withdrawn): The process for producing a screw for extruders according to claim 16, wherein the amount of the peripheral portion cut away is 2 to 6 % of the diameter of the screw.
18. (withdrawn): A process for producing a tire rubber member by using the screw according to claim 10.
19. (withdrawn): A tire rubber member manufactured by using the screw according to claim 10 and having a gauge fluctuation of 0.15 mm or less.
20. (previously presented): The screw according to claim 10, wherein the cylinder has a consistent inner diameter from the hopper port to a last thread of the screw at the downstream end.